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Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 SCI-06 ACDA-19 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9627
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
/AMCONSUL BOMBAY 5592
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2054

FROM NASA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TSPA IN
SUBJECT: GOI-USSR SPACE COOPERATION

REFS: A. NEW DELHI 0916. B. STATE 017857

BEGIN SUMMARY: IDSCUSSIONS WITH NASA OFFICIALS WHO WERE IN INDIA
JAN 28-FEB 8 IN CONNECTION WITH THE SATELLITE INSTRUCTURAL TELEVISIION

EXPERIMENT, BOLSTERED BY LOW-KEY CONVERSATIONS WITH GOI SOURCES,
LEAD TO THE FOLLOWING TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. THERE ARE NO DEFINITE PLANS FOR THE USSR TO LAUNCH A GEOSTATION-
ARY SATELLITE FROM INDIA. THIS HAS BEEN MENTIONED BY GOI EXPERT
OFFICIALS AS A LONG-RANGE POSSIBILITY, NOT A PROBABILITY.

2. THERE ARE NO DEFINITE PLANS FOR THE USSR TO HELP INDIA BUILD A
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GESTATIONARY SATELLITE.

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3. THE USSR TEAM VISITING INDIA MENTIONED IN REFTEL A, TIMES OF INDIA ARTICLE WAS IN CONNECTION WITH THE ONGOING INDIAN SCIENTIFIC SATELLITE PROJECT (ISSP).

4. WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO GET A COPY OF ANY GOI-USSR ISSP AGREEMENT. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED GOI OFFICIALS HAVE CONFIDED TO THE SCIENTIFIC ATTACHE THAT THIS IS BECAUSE THERE ISN'T ANY. FINAL WORD IS YET TO BE WORKED OUT, AND WHAT EXISTS IS ONLY A SERIES OF INTEROFFICE TYPE MEMCONS.

5. IN SPITE OF THIS, AND OF THE FACT THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE VERY BUREAUCRATIC AND EVERYTHING IS DONE THROUGH INTERPRETERS, WE HEAR THAT THE ISSP IS PROGRESSING WELL.

6. THE RUSSIANS HAVE ASSIGNED CAPABLE PEOPLE TO THE PROJECT, AND ARESUPPLYING THE BATTERIES, TAPE RECORDERS, AND SOLAR CELLS, AS WELL AS THE LAUNCHING.

7. INDIAN SPACE SCIENTISTS IN PERSONAL CONVERSATION WITH NASA PERSONNEL AND SCIATT STILL MAINTAIN THERE WILL BE INDIANS ON THE RUSSIAN LAUNCHING TEAM. WE STILL HAVE OUR DOUBTS, UNLESS THE RUSSIANS PICK A COUPLE OF VERY MYOPIC INDIANS AND GIVE THEM THE SAME TREATMENT THEY GAVE DE GAULLE, THE ONLY FOREIGNER SO FAR AS WE KNOW THAT HAS WITNESSED A RUSSIAN LAUNCHING.

8.THE LEADER OF THE GOI PART OF THE ISSP TEAM, U.R. RAO, WHO TEACHES FROM TIME TO TIME AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, HAS A STAFF OF ABOUT 300 OF WHOM SOME 200 ARE SCIENTISTS OR ENGINEERS.

9. HE IS PURCHASING MANY OF THE RELAYS AND TRANSISTORS FOR THE ISSP FROM THE USA, BUT THE INDIANS ARE PUTTING TOGETHER MOST OF THEIR OWN SUB-SYSTEMS.

10. THE ADDITIONAL "SOPHISTICATED SPACE SATELLITE" MENTIONED IN REFTEL A, TIMES OF INDIA ARTICLE IS PROBABLY JUST A BACK-UP SATELLITE FOR THE ISSP.

11. THE USSR HAS AGREED TO LAUNCH THIS BACK-UP SATELLITE IF THE FIRST ISSP LAUNCH FAILS.
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12. IF THE FIRST ISSP LAUNCH SUCCEEDS, THE GOI WOULD LIKE TO MAKE CERTAIN MODIFICATIONS IN THIS BACK-UP SATELLITE TO CONDUCT ADDI-TIONAL EXPERIMENTS, AND HOPE RUSSIANS WOULD LAUNCH IT ALSO. THE USSR HAS NOT AGREED TO THIS YET.

13. HENCE THE SIGNING OF "AN AGREEMENT FOR COLLABORATION IN RESPECT OF SPACE SATELLITES" MENTIONED IN REFTEL A TIMES OF INDIA

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ARTICLE MAY BE THE ISSUANCE, FINALLY, OF A FORMAL ISSP AGREEMENT, OR IT COULD BE ANOTHER INTEROFFICE TYPE MEMO PURSUANT TO THE BACK-UP SATELLITE.

14. THIS CABLE WAS WRITTEN AFTER DEPARTURE FROM INDIA OF THE LAST NASA OFFICIAL.

15. NO GUARANTEE.

16. THE REFERENCE IN THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF REFTEL B SHOULD BE TO NEW DELH'S 0916 NOT 0476.
SCHNEIDER

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